

GREENPEACE
ग्रीनपीस

**THE
UNFILTERED
TRUTH**

WITNESS 1.15

VOL. 50

A dense, lush green forest with sunlight filtering through the trees, creating a bright and vibrant atmosphere. The text is centered over the image.

VICTORY FOR
JUNGLISTAN!

YOU saved the Mahan forests!

In 2011, a Greenpeace activist climbed a tree in Chandrapur and we all pledged to save it. Today, your support enabled us to successfully save 4 lakh trees from getting destroyed.

Over the course of 4 years, more than one million individuals like yourself have given their immense support and not only managed to save these precious ancient forests of India, but also ensured that people have won over powerful interests and this forest is safe for now.

Years of rigorous campaigning and lobbying led to the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change as well as the Ministry of Coal to keep the Mahan block off limits for coal mining. In a response to an RTI filed by Greenpeace, both the ministries confirmed this wonderful news.

Celebrations began in full swing in Mahan as soon as this fantastic news of victory reached the villages.

This is a HUGE win for India's environment. However, this is not the end. Greenpeace India will continue to serve the environment, ensure its protection and preservation and stand up for the rights and survival of indigenous communities.



YOU CAN'T
MUZZLE DISSENT
IN DEMOCRACY

Free speech wins!

Greenpeace India campaigner Priya Pillai was denied permission to leave India and was barred from boarding her flight to UK despite holding a valid business visa, early this year.

Pillai and Greenpeace have spent years lobbying with Ministers and Bureaucrats in Delhi and Madhya Pradesh asking for proper implementation of the Forests Rights Act in Mahan. Pillai was invited to address the British Parliamentarians on the 14th of January 2015, on the situation of people in Mahan, Madhya Pradesh whose rights are being threatened by a proposed coal mine project led by Essar, a London-registered company. The project threatens to uproot the lives and livelihoods of the community which lives there and destroy a forest with over four lakh trees.

Pillai challenged the grounds on which the Ministry of Home Affairs prevented her from travelling by filing a writ petition. The High Court gave a remarkable verdict in favour of freedom of speech and democracy, ordering that the travel ban on Pillai be lifted and that the stamp saying 'OFF-LOAD' be expunged from her passport.

This is an exceptional victory, not just for Greenpeace but the democratic rights of all the citizens of India. The HC vindicates our view that dissenting does not mean being anti-national. We have faith in our democracy and the fundamental right to freedom of speech that upholds it.



DELHI'S
FUTURE GOING
UP IN SMOKE!

Delhi is choking

In January this year, Greenpeace monitored Delhi's air quality and found shocking results. The capital's rising levels of air pollution has surpassed Beijing, making it the worst in the world.

An air quality monitoring survey was conducted inside five prominent schools across Delhi. The findings were appalling; pollution level was found out to be 4 times the Indian safety limits and 10 times that of the World Health Organisation's. Environment minister Mr. Javadekar also accepted and acknowledged the air quality data gathered by Greenpeace India.

A campaign ToxiCity has been launched by Greenpeace to raise awareness on the issue and urge the Delhi and central government to take urgent steps in reversing the situation by taking precautionary measures that can ensure the health and safety of the children and citizens of Delhi.

From a positive standpoint, Greenpeace along with Centre for Occupational Environment and Health (COEH), had a constructive meeting with the Delhi Health Minister Shri Satyendra Jain in March.

Our capital is choking, and with your support we will ensure Delhi breathes in fresh air!



DELHI HC
VINDICATES
GREENPEACE INDIA!

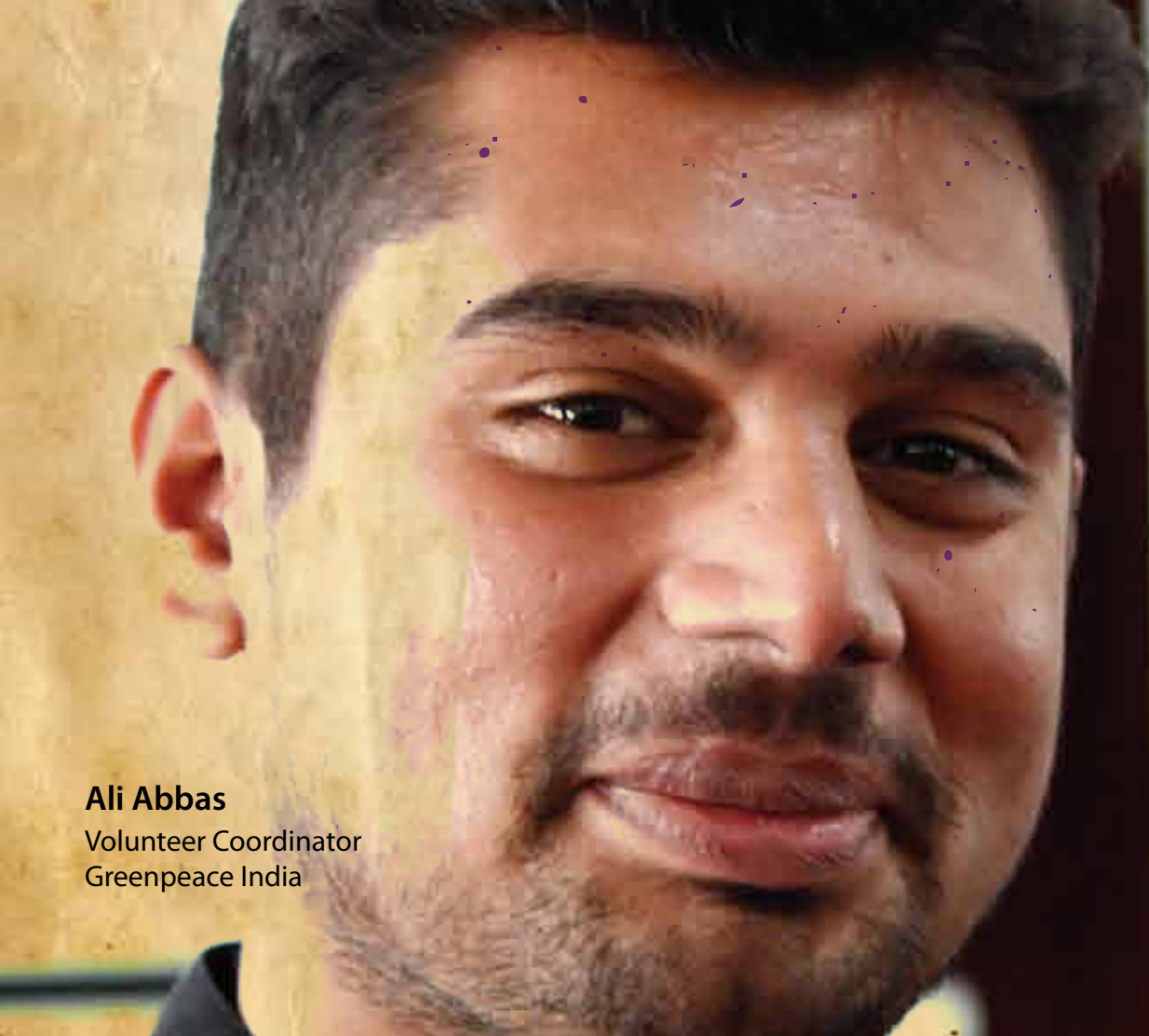
Funds released

This is great news! You would have read about the 'leaked' Intelligence Bureau report which accused Greenpeace India of being a threat to national economic security. The report further claimed the negative impact of our role on GDP growth to be 2-3% per annum. Whereas a World Bank report estimates that environmental degradation is costing India around 5-7% per annum of its GDP every year. That's hitting the sore spot on the environment versus development debate raging in our country.

What followed next was the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) blocking our access to the funds that we receive from individual donors abroad. However, we challenged MHA's decision in the Delhi High Court and on 20th January, 2015, the Delhi High Court ruled in our favour. This ruling not only vindicates Greenpeace India but also recognises our efforts towards preserving the rights of our countrymen and the environment.

Greenpeace India stands for people powered development which is sustainable and inclusive, and doesn't cost us our environment. Without a clean environment, we lose our health, we lose our future.

Our beautiful planet is worth fighting for. Let's continue to build a safe present and future with clean air, food, water and energy.

A close-up portrait of a man with dark hair and a light beard, looking slightly to the right. The background is a textured, light-colored wall.

Ali Abbas
Volunteer Coordinator
Greenpeace India

VOLUNTEER STORY

When the volunteers echoed “i am mahan”

Three years ago, I first visited Mahan along with a team of volunteers. We participated in launching a hot air balloon that flew over Mahan forest with Bollywood actor Abhay Deol and Greenpeace campaigner Priya Pillai in it to bear witness. It was the very first major awareness activity the volunteers participated in to highlight what later on became a landmark campaign victory.

It was a fight between people of Mahan forest who have lived there for generations and Essar, for whom Asia's oldest sal forest was just another business venture. In other words, it was a fight between people power vs economic power.

The fight to save the forest of Mahan also set unprecedented example of power of volunteering. From forest to Facebook, at each front our volunteers played a crucial role. Time and again, against all odds, from different parts of the country volunteers traveled to Mahan forest. Standing shoulder to shoulder, they raised the slogans " Ladenge, Jeetenge".

The expression Zindabad did not just echo in Mahan, it did in the cities too. It echoed in volunteer meets, emails and chats. Zindabad became not just a phrase, but a source of power and motivation between the Greenpeace activists who served in the Mahan forest. During a protest at the Essar HQ in Mumbai, 67 activists including people from Mahan forest were arrested and are now facing criminal charges.

All these efforts bore sweet fruits of a grand victory and Mahan got saved from corporate greed.

Fight for Mahan demonstrates the power of volunteers. The government may take away our funds but can't take away our army of superheros called volunteers.

With no room for doubt, I can say that 'people power' is bigger than 'economic power', and nothing is stronger than the heart of a volunteer.

Zindabad!

Greenpeace does not take any donation from corporates or governments.
Greenpeace is fiercely independent and survives on donations solely from individuals like you.

Greenpeace India Office -

Chennai:

Old No. 21, (New No. 06),
1st Floor, Rajaram Mehta Avenue,
Nelson Manickam Road, Chennai - 600 086
T: +91 44 42046502

Bangalore:

338, 8th Cross, Wilson Garden,
Bangalore - 560027
T: 080 42821010 , 4115486

NOTE: Our financial figures for the year 2014
will be published in the next newsletter.

Supporter Services

Email: supporter.services.in@greenpeace.org

Phone: 1800 425 0374

(Monday to Friday, 10:00am to 6:00pm)

New address/ email/ phone number?

Email your current contact information to
supporter.services.in@greenpeace.org

**If working for a cause and increasing awareness
is what you are looking for, then write to us:**

hannah.benjamin@greenpeace.org

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